

DECEMBER 14, 2003

**STATEMENT OF U.S. REPRESENTATIVE SCHAKOWSKY FOLLOWING CAPTURE OF SADDAM HUSSEIN BY U.S. TROOPS**

EVANSTON, IL - "Like everyone, I am happy that Saddam Hussein is in captivity. I congratulate our troops, our special forces, all those who were responsible for his capture.

"It remains to be seen if the situation in Iraq fundamentally changes: the chaos, the lack of security, political instability, the danger to our troops. I suspect it will not.

"I take exception to those who see this as a major vindication of this war and the policy of preemptive war. I disagree with those who say this proves that it was all worth it -- the loss of American lives, the isolation of the U.S., the enormous expense born essentially by Americans alone.

"I opposed the war because Saddam Hussein was never an imminent threat to the security of the United States. An international process was in place to defang this brutal dictator.

"The capture of Saddam Hussein is not about the war on terror. This is about Iraq and Saddam Hussein not about Osama bin Laden or those who attacked or plotted against the United States. In my view, this war has been a diversion from the war on terror in terms of troops, money, and intelligence assets.

"The capture of Saddam Hussein does not fundamentally change the dynamic in Iraq or the war on terrorism. I would caution the President not to once again declare "mission accomplished" on either front."